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A PICTURESQUE  
INTERIOR.

architects whose attention has been called to the improving and alteration of rooms and homes, find in it as much to exercise the talent as in their erection. As an example of what can be done in the first instance, one has only to glance at the library and dining-room of Mr. Horace Russel's house (Judge Hilton's son-in-law) in West Thirty-fourth Street.

The library shows a clever scheme of color to apparently heighten a very low ceiling. The room was about twenty-six by

used were such the most fastidious taste could not but admire.

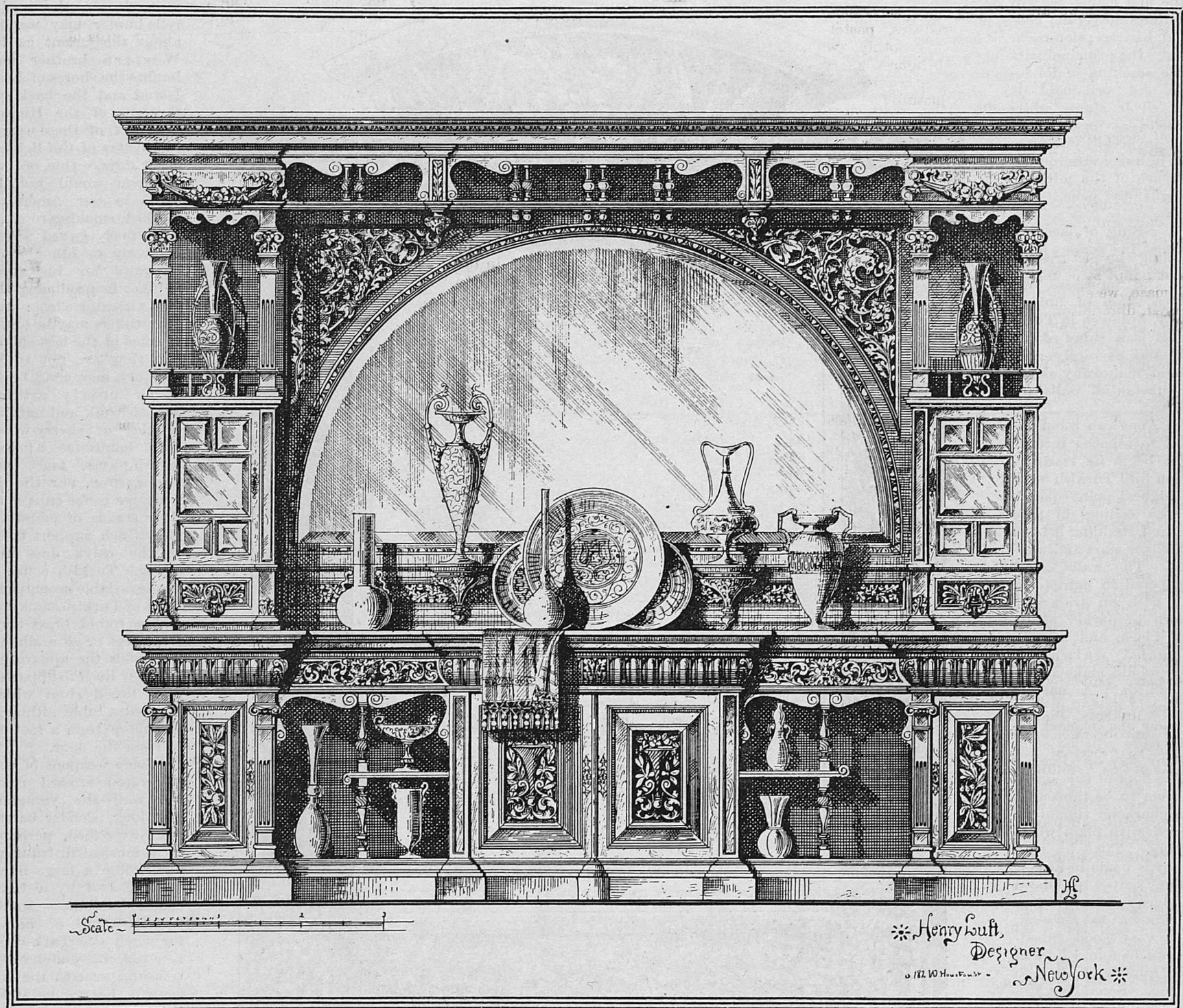
To arrange and alter the dining-room in the same house was a much more difficult matter. It was a badly proportioned room being sixteen feet by twenty-two with a ceiling nearly sixteen feet high, making a perfect cavern of the room. The problem here was to widen out the apartment. This was done by carrying around the room four feet below the cornice a heavy oak carved cornice, and springing across the room heavy carved wooden beams, rising like an arch to the center of the ceiling.

Between these beams and the ceiling it was filled in with open archwork, forming a series of small open colonnades in each beam, so that while these beams lowered the ceiling at the sides of the room nearly four feet, there was a lightness still preserved by their curving upward to the ceiling and the colors being shown through the vistas.

The lower part of the room which had a commonplace oak wainscot about three feet high

was inlaid with oak. The furniture was of richly carved dark mahogany, making harmonious contrast with the tone of the walls and the Turkey red of the rug. The chairs were covered with a dark tapestry of red and blue. A large bay window facing the fireplace was hung simply with antique lace curtains, giving a larger effect to the bay. There is no conventional sideboard, only a cabinet built across an angle, giving a most picturesque effect.

The architect who designed the above happy results, Mr. H. Edwards Fickens, also exhibits similar traits of this genius in the improvement of his apartments in East Twenty-eight Street. The dining-room is a marvel of what taste can accomplish. An old Dutch fireplace is built in penthouse fashion of wood dark with age, quaint handirons hold a fire basket suitable for wood or soft coal. A bay window has been reconstructed in a corner over an ordinary one with medallions of stained glass; near it is a cabinet of Venetian carving, depending from it a scarf of Oriental



SIDEBOARD, DESIGNED BY HENRY LUFT.

thirty-eight, and fifteen feet high. The walls were lined with bookcases reaching to within a few feet of the ceiling which lowered it. To give height to this by decorations low in tone suitable for a library was the object in view. To accomplish this, delicate flat moldings dividing the ceiling into a series of panels, leaving the center one square, were employed.

The first series of panels were decorated in tones of color just removed from rich red. The same color in gradually lesser shades was used in the other panels, except that next to the center, which was in old gold, while the center was in pure gold. The reflection of light from the windows of the room in gradually throwing up the ceiling, apparently raised the center and gave an aerial effect. These colors were all softened into each other by delicately overlaid stenciling of Moresque outlines.

The arrangement was simple and the effect all that could have been desired, as the tones of color

was heightened to six feet in a very picturesque way, a shelf about five inches wide was carried around the room supported on long slender carved brackets springing from the wainscot below. Between the wainscot and shelf it was filled in with richly embossed leather in the same oak tone.

The old marble fireplace was removed and one of heavily carved oak substituted about eight feet high, in which to give effect of depth without coming out in the room, the tiles forming the facing were built on a bevel from the outside face to the real fireplace opening, making the outside of the fireplace very large, the tiles seeming to form the back and sides of the fireplace.

The walls and ceilings were simply decorated in warm reddish oak tones, the ceiling rather daringly being made much the darkest, the whole effect lengthening and widening the room and bringing the ceiling into proper proportion imparting a most pleasing impression. The carpet was a very rich Turkey red Persian rug, the floor

embroidery. The dining table is of the same black wood, square and original in design, as are all the pieces of furniture Mr. Fickens own idea. A writing desk of oak and brass in one corner is the quaintest possible pattern, something in a Gothic style. A sofa with a wide, comfortable seat and gilt panels in the back is another original device. The cabinets in the room also partake of its idiosyncrasies. A Moresque jar of great size in its own peculiar blue stands near the window. The chairs of medieval tendencies are very comfortable spite of their straight backs.

The parlor opening into the dining-room has also been arranged artistically. The windows built over and refitted with stained glass. The fireplace of brass and scriptural tiles is flanked on one side by a bookcase that is as attractive in appearance as the contents of its shelves. Pretty little tables and chairs are very charming both to look at and for use, not always the case in this esthetic furniture.